SHRI R. KAMARAJ: My second supplementary is: What steps are being taken to safeguard the gas supply against any unforeseable happenings like fire, etc.?

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Question Hour is over.

WRITTEN ANSWERS TO STARRED QUESTIONS

Negotiations with Iraq for oil quota

*208. SHRI KHAN GHUFRAN ZAHIDI: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether government have a proposal to send a team to urge Iraq to raise oil quota;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether imports under 'food for oil' have been dropped; and

(d) if so, the reasons therefor ?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI RAM NAIK): (a) and (b) No, sir. However, during the 15'^ session of the Indian — Iraq Joint Commission for economic and technical cooperation held at Baghdad on 6"^ and 7'" July 2002, the issue of supply of Iraqi crude oil to India was discussed.

(c) and (d) Indian Oil Corporation Limited (lOCL) had been sourcing crude oil fron M/s. SOMO, the national oil company of Iraq, under the UN approved "Oil for Food" programme upto December 2000. Recer^ty lOCL has requested M/s. SOMO to allocate crude oil under the "Oil for Food" programme, covering a period of six months from December 2002 onwards.

Artificial filling up of ground water in Gujarat

*210. DR. A. K. PATEL: Will the Miniser of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware of sharp decline/shrinking of ground water table in most of the districts in Gujarat specially North Gujarat and Kutch-Saurashtra Region;

(b) if so, whether Government have launched any comprehensive plan to fill the ground water artificially to avoid servere water crisis in dought prone districts of Gujarat:

(c) if so, the funds earmarked for the implementation of the scheme; and